

XV.—QUAIL AND CHUKOR (*ALECTORIS GRAECA*).*(A Query).*

At the end of July in some disused fields near water a large number of chukor were seen coming down to drink. The birds were hens with chicks three-quarters grown and also cock birds. The time was 9 a.m. About a fortnight later these birds were seen in the same area.

At the end of September when the shooting season was opened a drive in this area produced no birds but a couple of quail were shot.

The migratory period of quail up near Sandeman is about early in September.

Can any reader inform me whether it is likely that while the quail are migrating they will—due to their aggressiveness and fighting reputation—drive chukor from their feeding areas near crops. The crops are maize (Indian Corn).

1/2ND GOORKHAS,  
FORT SANDEMAN.

C. G. TOOGOOD,  
*Lt.-Col.,*  
C.I.E., D.S.O.

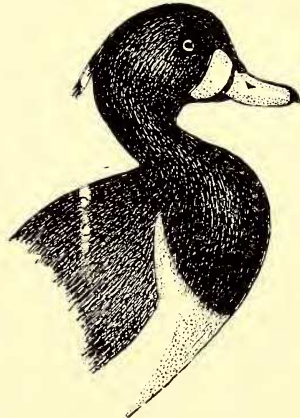
XVI.—UNUSUAL COLOURING IN A COMMON POCHARD (*NYROCA FULIGULA*).*(With a sketch).*

We possess a Common Pochard on our Ornamental Duck Pond at present with a conspicuous white patch on each side of its head, between the eyes and the bill.

This Pochard was purchased in February 1939 from a dealer in Lucknow, along with a number of other Tufted Duck, and White-eyed Pochard, and at that time was exactly like a female Tufted Duck.

After moulting into the eclipse plumage, it has just again moulted out into full Winter Plumage, exhibiting these two very conspicuous white patches.

In every other respect the pochard is exactly like any female Tufted Pochard, the same dusky brown plumage, and whitish under the tail, same white wing bar, in fact, identical. Can you identify the Duck or explain



the presence of these white patches? A sketch of the head is enclosed.

LAHORE,

September 23, 1939.

T. W. DEEKS,

Vice President,

Ornamental Pheasant Society of London,

Curator, Zoological Gardens, Lahore.

[Young examples of this Pochard frequently show a streak of white feathers at the base of the bill though these disappear in the adult stage, but normally there is nothing like the white cheek patches shown in the illustration. Stuart Baker, however, in his *Indian Ducks and their Allies*, says that he has in his collection a fine young male which has a white face extending back fully half an inch from the base of the upper mandible and the specimen described above is probably a similar aberrant form. Writing to us on the 2nd February, Mr. Deeks says that though 'still conspicuous, the white facial patches are getting smaller and duller.'—Eds.]

#### XVII.—SNAKE ATTACKED BY FROGS

I was taking my usual early morning exercise near my bungalow two days ago when I noticed a European nearby obviously interested in something happening at the edge of a flooded piece of country. (The monsoon is very heavy at present, and there is a good deal of casual water about.) On joining him I saw a grass snake, about 2 ft. long, struggling with a fat frog in its mouth. A few seconds later, with the frog still in its mouth, it started to swim across the flood water, which was only about 15 yds. wide at this particular place. I noticed innumerable frogs, all croaking like fury, at the edge of the water, and remember wondering at the time what would happen if the snake chanced to land up anywhere near them. This is exactly what did take place, but I was certainly amazed when three or four large frogs immediately attacked the snake which was forced to release its victim. It should be noted that at the time of attack the snake was still in the water, and I presume this would place it at a disadvantage and at the same time allow the frogs to adopt tactics which would hardly have paid on dry land! I wonder if any of your readers have known this happen before?

H. N. CHARRINGTON.

No. 1, BODYGUARD LINES,

BALLYGUNGE,

CALCUTTA.

Field, August 19, 1939.